

of Dr. Paul D. Foote, with Miss Torrey in immediate charge of the laboratory,

"During the early days of testing," Miss Torrey stated, "incautious exposure to the radiations from the tubes sometimes had bad effects. In addition to the direct burns, anemia and other blood disturbances were caused, as well as severe upsetting of certain elements of the glandular system. However, through the cooperation of the U.S. Public Health Service, these conditions were quickly overcome, and a complete system of safeguards installed. I do not believe that any place in this country where radium is handled is as well protected as this laboratory. Due to careful observance of our safety rules, we have gone through the past five years without any ill effects that I know of.

"From the moment of its arrival until it leaves the laboratory, and through every stage of the testing, every tube of radium is handled by the same safety routine. The bench where the packing and unpacking is done has a heavy iron shield that comes up to the chin of the worker, so that only the hands and face are exposed even for a short time. The tubes are never lifted with the fingers; we always use six-inch forceps. When we have to carry a tube for more than a moment or two, we place it in a closed wooden holder, or if we are carrying one of the lead-lined boxes of tubes we place it at the bottom of a bucket. The tubes are stored in a heavy safe, with an additional lining of lead plates inside.

"In the actual testing, brief exposures are unavoidable. Partly on this account, and partly because the observation of the testing electroscope involves considerable eyestrain, the observer never works more than half a day at a stretch on the testing, finding other occupations for the rest of the time.

"The health of the testing staff is carefully watched by the Public Health Service. Every couple of months they make blood counts, and once a year we each go through a thorough physical examination.

"We are not handling quite so much radium now as we did three or four years ago. Still, last year we tested a total of about eighteen grams, and this year about twelve, which is quite a lot, as quantities go in radium.

"There is no reason why any one should suffer in health from handling radium, if only proper safety measures are taken."

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#### LARGE LUNG CAPACITY NOT SURE PROTECTION

Contrary to popular belief, barrel chested individuals are not always perfectly healthy. Large lung capacity is not necessarily certain protection against diseases of the heart and lungs, is the statement of Dr. J.A. Meyers of the University of Minnesota Medical School.

In his book, "The Vital Capacity of the Lungs", which will soon be published, Dr. Meyers reports the results of his six years of experimental work and study on the lung capacity test as a means of medical diagnosis.

Some of the persons examined revealed a vital lung capacity of as much or more than 125 per cent. of the normal vital capacity. Usually, these are people who have done hard labor, such as farm work, or who have been active in athletics, or have trained their voices for singing, or have played some wind instrument over a considerable length of time.

Strangely enough, some individuals were found who presented no history of strenuous exercise, who were tall and thin with long chest and low diaphragms yet who had a lung capacity greater than normal.

Many people who were known to have 125 per cent. or more of normal lung capacity developed serious diseases of the heart or lungs. Upon later examination it was found that the disease in many instances had decreased the lung capacity of the individual and still left him with more than 100 per cent. of normal capacity.

Dr. Meyer further states, however, that a decrease in an individual's normal lung capacity is an indication of the presence of some disease condition, usually a disease of the heart or lungs, and offers a valuable diagnostic test.

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#### EXPLAINS INHERITANCE OF MENTAL CHARACTERS

"Brains" of the first class are passed on from parent to child in sections, not in one piece; so also is stupidity. This is the gist of a new theory on the mode of the inheritance of mental traits, advanced at the meeting of the Eugenics Research Association by Prof. Harrison R. Hunt of Michigan State College.

According to Prof. Hunt, the idea generally accepted at present, that intelligence or its lack acts as a single unit character in inheritance, is inadequate to explain the obvious gradations in intelligence, and also to account for the appearance in a family of children either much brighter or much duller than their parents.

Prof. Hunt assumes at least five pairs of hereditary characters that have to do with the passing on of intelligence. If both parents are persons of high intelligence, and possessed of all five pairs of these characters, their children will also average very high. If they are idiots, having none of the pairs of characters, their children also will be idiots. Intermediate conditions representing people of good average intelligence but not geniuses, will produce a mixture of offspring types, with occasional exceptional children, and once in a while also offspring of low mentality.

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#### GREATNESS NOT DEPENDENT ON POSITION IN FAMILY

It makes no difference in your chances for getting into "Who's Who" whether you were the first child in the family or the fifteenth. Greatness, like the wind, "goeth whither it listeth" according to statistical studies of eminent persons reported to the Eugenics Research Association by Dr. Wilhelmine E. Key, of Battle Creek, Michigan. Her researches were occasioned by the conflicting claims of other students, some of whom claimed that elder sons became great men, while others contended that the latest-born had the best chances of achieving eminence.

Dr. Key studied the family records of a number of eminent Americans, ranging from Alexander Hamilton and John Quincy Adams to Mark Twain and Augustus St. Gaudens, and found that in the long run it apparently makes no difference what a person's birth-rank or position among his brothers and sisters may be, or what were the ages of his parents when he was born.